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# LECTURE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE OF THE  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF QUEBEC, AT THE PARLIAMENT  
HOUSE, QUEBEC, ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER, 18th, 1895,

BY

PROFESSOR JAMES W. ROBERTSON,

DOMINION DAIRY COMMISSIONER AND AGRICULTURIST.

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A special meeting, of the select standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly on Agriculture and Colonization, was held in the large room of the Private Bills Committee, Parliament House, on Wednesday, Dec. 18th, 1895, to hear a lecture by Professor James W. Robertson, Dominion Dairy Commissioner and Agriculturist, upon the proposed opening up of a Canadian export trade in chilled meats to Great Britain.

Benjamin Beauchamp, Esq., president of the committee, presided, and there were present the Hon. Louis Beaubien, Commissioner of Agriculture and Public Works; Mr. Gigault, assistant commissioner; Hon. T. Chase Casgrain, Attorney-General; Hon. L. P. Pelletier, Provincial Secretary, and several other members of the Committee and of the Legislature, besides merchants of the city, members of the press, &c.

The chairman, Mr. Beauchamp, M. P. P., introduced the lecturer.

## PROFESSOR ROBERTSON

said: Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen: "I regret that while I understand your beautiful language, I do not speak it well enough to be able to address you in it on this occasion. This committee is, I presume, the most important that exists in the Province of Quebec. The Province depends for its well-being upon the progress of agriculture, and the object of this committee, I take it, is to stir up your farmers to make the most of your resources. It is not sufficient to say that you have wonderful resources unless you turn them to good account. You must realize on them or they are no good to anybody. So far, therefore as this committee can stir up the farmers of the Province to make the most of their opportunities, just so far will it be rendering the very largest kind of good service."

He appreciated at the very highest, the good things possessed by the Province of Quebec, but he knew of none of them that could not be made better than they were.

The lecturer then directed the attention of his hearers for a short time to a large chart containing the following:

Soil.

## Climat.

## Climate.

## Approvisionnement d'eau.

## Water Supply.

## Matériaux de constructions.

## Building Materials.

Travail utile.

Available Labor:

Marchés.

## Markets.

## Plantes.

## Plants.

## Animaux.

Cattle.

### Produits.

## Products.

## Qualité.

### Quality.

Prix.

Cost.

Prix.

Price.

### Profits.

## Profits.

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He explained that this chart showed the agricultural resources of the Province at a glance. To commence with, there was rich soil in abundance; this did not always imply a rich people. In fact, it very often happened that the wealth of a people was in inverse ratio to the fertility of the land on which they live. He supposed that nowhere in the world was there richer land than was to be found in Egypt, and yet the farmers of the delta of the Nile were the poorest and most down-trodden agriculturists to be found anywhere. In parts of this very Province the soil was not understood, and so the energies of the people were expended in a wrong direction. Then again, soil was not everything if climate was unfavorable; in this connection he declared that he knew of places where the soil was fifty feet deep, and yet people were scarcely able to live upon it on account of the unfavorable climatic conditions. But in the Province of Quebec the climate was favorable as well as the soil, and the development of the latter was neither retarded by the action of drought or of unseasonable frosts. He described the climate of Quebec as most reliable; then it had, too, an ample water supply in its wells and flowing streams, furnishing all the water required for the needs of cattle. These three possessions, good soil, reliable climate and constant water supply, enabled farmers to grow plants as shown by the chart. Oranges cannot, of course, be grown here, but we can grow most successfully plants that are admirably adapted for the keeping of cattle. Then again, this Province is blessed with an abundance of building materials; so that though the climate be cold in winter, cattle need never know it, provided good use is made of these materials. By putting our plants and our cattle together we get products, but in the operation labor is required. Now it is largely the quality of our available labor that determines our products. Without any desire of being discourteous or of being uncharitable towards it, he was compelled to say that hitherto the available farm labor in Quebec had been of a rather low order, and one use of this Committee was to improve the quality of that labor. It would illustrate what he meant if he explained that if he were taken into a blacksmith's shop and told to make a horse-shoe, he believed he could produce one, but it would be exceedingly crude, and he would have wasted a great deal of unnecessary fuel, and spoiled a good deal of iron in the attempt, and this because his efforts and his training had been directed to other lines. So the energies of the available labor of this Province were capable of being directed towards the saving of both time and material. But while in quality it was capable of improvement, its cost was so small that it afforded this Province a splendid chance against all competitors. In competing for profits it must be borne in mind that these latter fall to those who can most cheaply produce the better article, and here again the Province of Quebec has great opportunities in competition with other countries, in the tendency to provide products, arising from the large families characteristic of the people and their habit of remaining for years upon the farm. Profits, that everybody is after, depends upon the difference between products and prices. Butter is selling to-day in Montreal from ten to twenty cents per pound, and upon its quality depends the place that its price occupies in this scale. It costs no more to make butter that sells at fifteen cents per pound than to make that which sells at ten cents; so that the extra five cents is extra profit. Some of our butter is just as good to-day as that made in



Denmark ; but while the Danes get paid, not only for the quality of their butter, but for the reputation they have made with it in the past, we only get paid for quality in ours, with a deduction for its past bad reputation. It is the same thing with butter as with lawyers. You know that a lawyer with a great reputation receives, perhaps, five times the fee or retainer that would be paid an ordinary practitioner, though the former will work no harder upon the case than his less fortunate colleague.

There are certain places where these products must go. We cannot consume them all in this country. We have to find a market.—Now the only one that we can find is in Great Britain ; as represented by their markets the British people are the great eaters of the world. Their country is the only importing one for these products. Nearly all the civilized countries in the world are struggling for the privilege and profit, if any can be found, of purveying to their tables ; the United States, France, Germany, Denmark, Italy, Holland, and all the rest of them, are engaged in a peaceful but merciless warfare for the preference of her buyers. Never in the history of the world was one nation so eminent by reason of the endeavors of the others to supply her and to get her to take their products. She gives no favors. If the Argentine Republic offers her grain at one cent per bushel less than her own Colonies, she will deal with it, and if Denmark offers butter at one cent per pound cheaper than Canada, Englishmen will buy there. Therefore we have to fight our own way. Now, as in markets there is competition, so there is in different kinds of food. He exhibited on a chart, lines of different lengths, illustrating the food value of twenty-five cents worth of several common foods. One kind of line represented calories, indicating the force value or the fuel value of the food. A caloric is a unit designating the amount of heat which would raise the temperature of a pound of water four degrees Fahrenheit. Another kind of line designated albuminoids, another carbon-hydrates and another fats. The chart illustrated the fact that every pound of cheese is the equivalent of  $2\frac{1}{4}$  lbs of the best beef that can be bought for food purposes. This, said the Professor, is the reason why the English laborer's diet of bread and cheese gives him a well-balanced ration at the very lowest cost. Discussing bread and butter, he indicated where the one supplied to the body what was lacking in the other, both being so strong in one essential ingredient that together they formed a most nutritious food. Bread, butter, cheese and beef could be raised as cheaply and of as good a quality in the Province of Quebec as anywhere, and these are bound to be the foods that England in the future will buy the most of. Showing how productive land could be made, he showed that even in the matter of corn stalks, the intelligent farmer, though he could not eat them himself, put animals between himself and the crops. By means of skilled farming, five acres could readily produce sufficient for the maintenance of five men, and so our 28,500,000 acres of farming lands might be made to sustain a population of  $28\frac{1}{2}$  millions of people in affluence.

When man lived by hunting, twenty square miles was necessary to the support of one individual, and even pasturage required many acres to yield sufficient for one man's subsistence. Now when we are all able to produce from five



acres enough to maintain five men and have not the population to consume all that we produce, the balance may be sent abroad. To be able to hold our own in competing for British custom it is necessary that the foods should be wholesome, nice in taste, nice in appearance, and particularly, nourishing. They must also be foods of reputed respectability, as to origin and name, according to the English notions of these. Many a British family, rather than offer to their guests a roast under the name of "Chicago" or "Australian" beef, will unconsciously pay the retail butcher at the rate of six cents per pound to tell a lie in a suave and unconscionable way for them by calling it "best Scotch" or "best English." We want, said Professor Robertson, to put this difference in our own pockets. He told an amusing story of one of his experiences in England with a butcher, who brought two car loads of meat every week from Liverpool (which must necessarily have been American or Canadian) but who declared that all his joints were prime English or Scotch fed. Great Britain obtains her supplies of dairy products from the countries shown hereafter :—

### Butter and Cheese, 1894.

	Butter value.	Cheese value.
Total.....	\$65,489,268	\$26,644,708
	Quantity cwts.	Quantity cwts.
Total.....	2,327,474	2,266,145
From Canada.....	20,887	1,142,104
“ United States.. . . .	29,996	672,347
“ Denmark . . . . .	1,102,493	.....
“ Australasia.....	292,097	54,375
“ France.....	424,645	52,969
“ Sweden.....	266,306	.....
“ Holland .. . . .	165,157	298,693
“ Germany.....	137,755	.....
“ Other countries.....	135,999	45,657

Canada is doing well supplying cheese to Great Britain. She now furnishes over fifty per cent of the total quantity imported there. That has been brought about mainly by the excellent quality of it, and by the means which have been taken to get Canadian cheese and its quality recognised under its own name, all the way through to the consumers. The Canadian trade in butter is a growing one, and the shipments of fresh-made creamery butter are growing, and during the current year have given it a better name than it had been able to attain hitherto. A very large trade in that product is coming in the near future, and there are plenty of opportunities for it; for out of 2,327,474 cwts. imported by Great Britain in 1894 only 20,887 cwts. were supplied by Canada. But add the British imports of cheese and butter together and they do not amount to the value of the dressed meats that she imports; and of these Canada supplies none at all, though they total the immense sum of 110,000,000. The following table

shows the total number of animals which are available for food and whence the supply might be obtained :—

	Cattle.	Sheep.	Swine.
In the World.. . . . .	298,873,657	534,848,924	102,172,224
United Kingdom.. . . . .	11,207,554	31,774,824	3,278,030
Canada .. . . . .	4,060,662	2,513,977	1,702,785
Australasia.. . . . .	12,632,018	116,153,632	1,026,014
United States.. . . . .	52,378,283	42,273,553	46,094,807

In exhibiting the chart containing the above figures he referred incidentally to sheep and swine. Sheep should be more extensively kept on dairy farms ; they have been called “the golden hoofed,” and, in addition to the profit to be derived from wool and mutton, it must be remembered that they eat up numbers of noxious weeds. Australia had no less than 116,000,000 sheep. Speaking of swine, he said, he had learned with great regret that, owing to the reduced price of hogs, farmers in this Province were selling their breeding sows. He declared it to be a great mistake, for since there was little doubt that hogs would be much dearer next year, this was the very time when breeding sows should be kept. He suggested that the committee might, with great advantage to farmers, draw their attention to this fact. In this, and kindred ways, it could be of great value to the people of this Province, who would be quite ready to admit the disinterestedness of its motives, so far as purposes of trade or speculation are concerned, and the opportunities enjoyed by its members for informing themselves upon a variety of subjects. He said, that in the matter of butter, Canada ought to send to England as much as Denmark. Next to Denmark, France was the largest supplier of butter to Britain. Australia had also exported considerable.

Hon. Mr. Beaubien asked the lecturer what amount of bonus was paid by the Australian government ?

Professor Robertson said, that now the trade had outgrown the bonussing stage, but some \$252,000 had been expended by the government to bonus the export of Australian butter. The system was continued for four years, and was at one time as high as 6 cents per pound.

Hon. Mr. Pelletier asked Professor Robertson what he thought of the probable benefits to be derived from the adoption of the proposed scheme of a preferential trade tariff with the Colonies, and protection against the rest of the world ?

The Professor said, that though he was no politician, he favored such a

scheme ; he was going to England this winter, and when there would talk it up for the good of Canada.

In shipping live cattle to Britain, we were meeting with new competition, including that from Australasia. But the freight alone from the southern colonies costs \$39.00 per head, which with all costs added, amounted to \$68.00 per head, while the selling price of the steers in England was \$88.00 per head. So that trade was virtually out of the race. The Argentine Republic had also gone into the live cattle export trade, but they had this disadvantage : at present their cattle are coarse and ill-bred, and sold in Britain for \$1.00 to \$1.50 less per head than Canadian cattle. The price obtained in London for the best United States and Canadian cattle up to the end of August was \$8 per 100 lbs. When he made this statement at Guelph the other day some of the dealers and shippers of Ontario cast a doubt upon it, considering, probably, that it reflected upon them in their dealings with farmers ; but the shippers did not get that price, for there was the British wholesaler between. We want some device, however, by which we can have more of the price paid by the consumer come over here. At Liverpool the average price during the same period for cattle on foot was \$7.43 per 100 lbs. At the same time the hind quarters of beef which were forwarded in refrigerator chambers were sold for from \$10.50 to \$13.50 per 100 lbs. The prices for the whole carcass from Deptford and Birkenhead were from \$9.00 to \$11.50 per 100 lbs. The maximum price for the chilled or refrigerated beef was considerably above the top prices obtained for beef from the United States or Canadian cattle killed at the abattoirs at Deptford or Birkenhead. The quality and price of "chilled beef" are not to be confounded with, or mistaken for frozen beef. Hind quarters of frozen beef from Australia were selling for \$6.50 to \$7.00 per 100 lbs., at the same time frozen beef, when thawed out, becomes unsightly in appearance, and that acquired attribute stays on it and with it, even after it is cooked. Not only so ; but in the process of freezing the small blood sacs in the beef burst, the nutriment escapes in the subsequent thawing and cooking. There is no reason why Canadian meat should be frozen. Properly chilled it will keep for two months, and is all the better for the chilling. In the time that it takes to cross the ocean it becomes ripened, or cured like cheese. The latter is not so good to use fresh, and the best of beef is tough that is used immediately after being killed. He never yet saw a steer so well fed that its flesh would be really tender when so used ; but chilled for ten days, the flesh of even the most poorly fed animal ought to be tender. Chicago butchers always chilled their beef two weeks before using it. In the London Market the difference between the prices paid for Scotch and English sides of beef, and those sold under the name of Canadian or United States, is still considerable. Scotch sides are quoted at \$11.25 to \$14.62 per 100 lbs., English sides are quoted from \$11.25 to \$12.87½ ; at the same time United States and Canadian sides are sold for from \$9.00 to \$11.50 per 100 lbs. These are the prices at the wholesale markets. The difference in price entirely disappears before the cuts from these sides reach the consuming purchaser. There is no discernible or perceptible difference in the real quality, but there is a very decided and appreciable difference in the profits which stay in the tills of the wholesale dealers or retail

butchers. It is highly desirable that Canadian farmers and shippers should get their own legitimate share of that great profit. We must remember, however, that our meat will go into competition, not with the Australian frozen article, but with the best English and Scotch article. Ours is no way intrinsically inferior, and if the consumer pays the same price, surely it is only reasonable that we should have our fair share of that price.

The following table shows the number of sheep and lambs, and the quality of their products imported into Great Britain :—

From	Sheep and Lambs. Number.	Mutton fresh. cwts.	Mutton preserved. cwts.	Other sorts. cwts.
Canada.....	135,622	.....	1,258	2,320
United States.....	198,138	23,121	3,626	68,394
Denmark .....	65,439	.....	.....	.....
Argentine Republic.....	73,446	585,729	.....	.....
Australasia .....	.....	1,439,502	106,619	43,965
Other countries.....	11,952	246,714	1,425	35,703
Total.....	481,597	2,295,066	112,928	150,382

There has been a great increase in the number of sheep and lambs shipped from Canada during the current year; and now our sheep and lambs are threatened with the embarrassing scheduling regulations which have done so much harm to our cattle trade. This reported discovery of scab in Canadian sheep in England reminded him a little of the Quaker butter dealer, who having offered his brother a lower price than usual for his butter, on the ground that he smelled something unpleasant about it, was told by the other, "I think thee smells a dull market." Britishers appear to fear such a competition in the Canadian cattle and sheep trade as will bring down prices. But if we cannot get in one way we must try another. Australasia sends large quantities of mutton to England and sells it at a profit, but it cannot compete with ours, because it is frozen, and frozen mutton has the same objectionable qualities as frozen beef. So low are the rates of the great steamship lines, that our distance from the English market means scarcely anything, and it will not cost much more to send our chilled mutton from Canada to England than it does to send sheep to London from the Welsh hills. The carriage of cheese from Cheshire to London costs nearly as much as from St. Hyacinthe to Great Britain via Montreal.

The imports of swine products are enormous and continuously increasing. The following table shows the quantities :—



From	Pork fresh cwts.	Pork salted cwts.	Bacon cwts.	Ham cwts.
Canada. ....	.....	7,702	254,443	50,576
United States.....	4,339	150,186	2,561,203	1,075,270
Denmark.....	2,015	61,360	766,828	1,785
Holland.....	133,526	1,935	23,666	.....
Sweden.....	.....	1,791	72,541	.....
Other countries.....	40,503	2,045	10,923	2,153
Total.....	180,383	225,019	3,689,604	1,129,784

The pork-packers of Wiltshire are reported to have been paying in September of the current year,  $9\frac{1}{2}$  cents per pound, live weight, for pigs weighing not more than 150 lbs. and having not more than  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches of fat on their backs. To obtain a large share of this trade it is necessary that swine and their products from Canada should be specially produced and specially prepared to meet the taste and demand of the consumers in Great Britain. They decidedly prefer bacon which is lean, thin, and mildly cured. With cold storage facilities there is reasonable probability of developing a large and profitable trade with Great Britain in chilled pork, for though the present scheme does not specially include the export of pork, he believed the raising of it would be a considerable help to dairy farmers. The prosperity of the dairy farmers of Canada is dependent in a great degree upon the measure of success and profit with which they rear, feed and market animals and their products.—The live stock interests of the country are inseparably interwoven into the systems and methods of agriculture here. To maintain the fertility of the land, to ensure the growth and rotation of a variety of crops, as well as to obtain a profitable revenue from the capital invested and the labor employed, it is necessary that farmers in Canada should rear and feed increasingly larger numbers of cattle, swine, sheep and poultry. By the growth of Indian corn fodder and other forage crops, the farmers are now able to feed twice or three times as many head of animals as they could provide for from their farms a few years ago. To give stability to the profits from farms, and thus to ensure prosperity to the whole country, it is necessary that all perishable food products from Canadian farms should secure as good a place relatively in the British markets as has been won by Canadian cheese and creamery butter. Judicious and energetic action by the government can accomplish as much for beef, mutton, pork, poultry and other products, as has been done for cheese and butter. It is most urgent and desirable that something of this kind should be done. The export of cattle from Quebec and Ontario had fallen off so fast of late years that if it had not been for the rapid expansion of the dairy industry, due to the adoption of the cold storage system, enabling farmers to continue to keep cattle at a profit, we would have been as

a people in the worst possible condition. Of the 96,564 cattle shipped in 1895 it is reported that over 40,000 came from Manitoba and the North-west Territories. The shipments of cattle from Ontario and Quebec were checked in 1892 doubtless by the regulations of the British Board of Agriculture, whereby our cattle are required to be slaughtered at the port where they are landed. That leaves no alternative market, and the restriction is used to beat down prices unmercifully to shippers, and through them back on the Canadian farmers. In so far as the restrictions prevented the shipments of store or lean cattle from Canada, it was not an unmixed evil, except to the Scotch and English farmers who purchased and fed them. They have been agitating for the repeal of the restrictions ever since; but what are they among so many who are resolutely opposed to any relaxation of these regulations? Even if the repeal of the unwarranted action scheduling Canadian cattle would give relief and safety to the business, it is evident that it is not to be expected from that quarter. I am of opinion that relief should be sought, and I am confident it could be gained by the opening up of a trade by which the cattle may be slaughtered in Canada and the dressed beef supplied direct to the consuming purchasers in Great Britain. There are many difficulties in the way which I think no private individual or joint stock company can overcome. The business is one which is urgently and essentially important to the welfare of Canadian farmers; and because the government can overcome the difficulties successfully without the expenditure of a large sum of money, it seems befitting that the government should take it up.

When our cattle are shipped alive by rail and afterwards by steamship, they arrive in Great Britain in a jaded condition: they look at their worst, and are at about their worst for killing for beef. Both of these conditions enable the British buyer to beat the prices down. Formerly, when the cattle could be rested and fed on grass or succulent fodders on British farms, for even a few weeks, they gained tremendously in weight and recovered in quality quickly. That alternative avenue for marketing the cattle caused a relatively higher price to be obtainable, and also gave steadiness to the prices and the demand which is now wanting.

The Canadian shippers, with the cattle at the port where they have been landed, have no alternative but to sell at once, or within two weeks at whatever prices they can get. If they hold over for even a fortnight, the cost of feeding becomes a large item of expense, and the arrivals of fresh shipments by the next steamers give the buyers an additional argument, which they use most effectively in further depressing the market and lowering the prices.

The beef from Canadian cattle when shipped and handled in that way does not reach the consumers in a condition which permits it to secure a good reputation for the excellence of quality which it would have if the consumers were able to purchase the beef at its best from such cattle as are fed in Canada.

As a matter of fact, a considerable quantity of the beef from Canadian fed cattle does not reach the British consumers under the name of "Canadian beef."



The misrepresentation which finds a place in that practice works directly and continuously to the injury of Canadian interests. It prevents us from establishing the trading connection between the consumers and our producers for Canadian products under their own name, which alone can ensure a satisfactory continuity to the demand.

The cattle buyers and retail butchers in Great Britain get more than their proper share of the ultimate price paid by the consumers for the beef from Canadian cattle. The profits which they exact, as between the consumers and producers, and which mainly come out of the pockets of Canadian farmers, are little short of extortion. Their voice and influence have been joined to that of the scarcely-veiled hostility of the landed interest of Great Britain against the withdrawal of the regulations scheduling Canadian cattle.

These two powerful interests, although united from entirely different motives, may readily bring about such a condition of affairs as to wreak almost irretrievable disaster upon our live stock interest; that would be calamitous to our farmers for many years to come. An alternative means of reaching the British consumer with Canadian beef is the only way whereby a safe and elastic outlet can be provided for the increasingly larger numbers of cattle which are being reared and fattened in Canada. At the present time there is no opening for the exportation of small-sized cattle such as are most commonly grown and fattened in the Province of Quebec. In one of our feeding tests on the Central Experimental Farm it was found that the cost of feed consumed per 100 lbs of increase in the live weight was least in the case of a calf-steer of the French-Canadian or Quebec-Jersey breed. The beef from such cattle is of excellent quality, but their small size has debarred them from being exported alive, as the freight charges are reckoned per head, and a small animal occupies the space in a steamship which would otherwise be filled by one of heavier weight.

Dressed beef has not been shipped from Canada hitherto, because cold storage service was not provided of an adequate sort for any of our perishable food products until it was taken up by the government during the current year. Even a greater measure of success than has attended the cold storage service for the putting of Canadian creamery butter on the British markets can attend the shipments of dressed beef and other meat products to Great Britain. That this matter cannot be inaugurated by private enterprise is evident from the tremendous disabilities from which the Armour's and other great United States packers and shippers, backed by millions of dollars, have not been able to escape. The question of sentiment on the part of British consumers is a most powerful and far-reaching factor in determining the way they buy and the prices they pay for the article of food they consume. The name "frozen beef" and the stories set afloat about the abominations of slaughtering-houses, diseased animals, &c., are powerful to keep the best class of customers from buying or from letting it be known they do buy, anything but the best English and Scotch beef. If beef as good and as cheap as the best English and Scotch beef could be obtained from shops or depots in Great Britain under the name and supervision

of the Canadian government for one year, as an object lesson and introduction of the business, the best class of buyers and consumers in each of the large cities could be attracted to give preference to Canadian products. The beef could be sold at prices much lower than the current prices for a similar quality of English or Scotch beef, and an ever-growing demand for our beef could be created at such prices as would leave it possible for Canadian farmers to obtain higher relative prices than they have been getting during the past few years. He was authorized by the Minister of Agriculture to announce that a plan would be submitted to parliament next session for its approval, by which it would be possible to place our meats in the best possible condition upon the British markets, ripened and chilled, but not frozen. The government would probably buy some 500 head of cattle a week, the joints of which should be wrapped up in distinctively Canadian wrappers, and distributed to eight or ten of the largest centres in Britain. He had heard some criticism upon the government buying and selling cattle and meat,—some people calling it “state socialism” and others “paternalism”; but he had lived long enough to know that people could not be injured by the nature of the names thrown at them. He remembered, too, that in 1886 when he was sent home to England by the Ontario government, he had with him in London \$1,400 worth of cheese and butter. He even retailed large quantities of the butter in two-penny packages, and cheese at a penny per packet contained in a wrapper, upon which was printed, “Ask your grocer for Canadian cheese. It is as good as this.” It did wonders in opening up the English trade in Canadian cheese. This was not a case of government absorbing business, but of opening up the way for others to do it for themselves. He was decidedly in favor of the government opening shops at first for the exclusive sale of Canadian dressed meats, for if it was undertaken by private enterprise, the competition would be fatal. But this would not be attempted next door to a government shop.

The chairman, Mr. Beauchamp, M. P. P., asked if the government was willing to undertake this.

Mr. Robertson said that what he had just recommended were the outlines of a scheme that would certainly be carried out by the government, provided parliament voted the money. The actual net cost to the government for the management of the whole business would depend upon the prices that may prevail in Canada for cattle during next season. If the prices in Canada be relatively low, compared with former years, which would be most unfortunate, then he was confident that the whole plan and business could be managed without any cost, loss, or charge to the government, and would show a profit; but in case the price of Canadian cattle in Canada should be relatively higher than in former years—which would be a good thing for the country—then he estimated that a sum of \$30,000 might be required to meet the extraordinary and unusual expenses which are inseparable from the inauguration of the business, at the abattoirs, on board the steamships, at the depot at the port of landing, and at the depots or shops for the distribution of the beef and other meats in Great Britain. The government control of this business would win for it a status and

name in Great Britain at once which no private individual or joint stock company could ever secure. The prestige of powerful government administration, the reputation of the government in having successfully assisted in putting Canadian cheese and Canadian butter on the British markets in the best way, would vanquish the active hostility of the retail butchers, without any keen commercial struggle involving loss. He illustrated this by describing the manner in which he was received in England in 1892, as a government representative of the Canadian dairy industry. His lectures in both London and Liverpool before the Chambers of Commerce were largely attended and taken down on one occasion by no less than nine stenographic reporters, while the great English newspapers published column after column of them furnishing an advertisement simply on account of his connection with the Canadian government, which as a private individual he could only have obtained by paying for it at the rate of a guinea an inch. There was any amount of this kind of sentiment towards Canada in England and it was by no means unusual for him to hear in hotel corridors and elsewhere many favorable comments upon the enterprise and the new departure of the Canadian government. He deprecated the system of consigning on commission, for commission merchants were always most ready to please their customers by giving them bargains and so encouraging them to come again.

As an instance of what government initiative could do, he cited the results which had followed the efforts of the dairying service of the Dominion department of agriculture in Prince Edward Island.

In 1892 a joint stock company erected one cheese factory, whose revenue in a single year almost paid for its cost. In 1893 eleven such factories were erected at the farmers' own expense. These were patronized by 1,187 farmers, and in a short summer season produced cheese valued at \$10,000. In 1894 there were sixteen cheese factories and two creameries on the Island. In this year the value of the cheese and butter produced was \$90,000. In 1895 the Dairy Commissioner similarly managed 23 cheese factories and two creameries in the same district, yielding an output of about \$190,000 worth of cheese and butter. At first the government commissioner supervised all these factories, but now all, except two or three perhaps of the smaller ones, can be run on a profit by their proprietors.

The cheese trade of Canada has reached proportions as large as seem to be safe, excepting for the natural annual growth, which may keep pace with the annual growth of demand from increase of consumers. The making of butter in creameries during the winter can be extended very greatly, and joined to it should be the feeding of cattle and swine for beef and pork uses.

If the business of shipping dressed meats be begun at once it would give safety to the outlook for the whole of the live stock interest of Canada and prevent a panicky disaster, which might come at any time, if our cattle were to be wholly excluded from being landed alive in Great Britain. An export de-

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mand for Canadian dressed beef might also be created, which would last during the whole year.

Immediately after the close of navigation at the port of Montreal exports of cattle from Canada practically cease. That results in great lowering of the prices of fat cattle until the opening of navigation during the following season. During the present month, it is reported that quarters of beef are being sold in Toronto and other markets as low as two cents per pound.

Thus, the opening up of an export trade to Great Britain in dressed meats would be an undoubted, immediate, and lasting benefit to the farmers in all the provinces of Canada lying between the Rocky Mountains and the Atlantic coast. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. Milton Macdonald, M. P. P. for Bagot, proposed a vote of thanks to the lecturer, which was carried amid loud applause.

Upon motion of Mr. Girard, M. P. P. for Lake St. John, it was unanimously voted by the committee to print in full the report of the lecture in both languages and to distribute it to the members of the House, and, if possible, amongst the farmers of the Province.

Before the meeting adjourned, Professor Robertson again addressed it, exhibiting some of the specimens of butter from the St. Hyacinthe dairy school as being of exactly the color—that of straw—which is demanded by the British market.





